

DOCTRINAL AND CONTROVERSIAL.

Hard Times.

BY J. H. MILLER, M. D. D. D.—California.

This is becoming quite a universal cry, not only in this State—in these United States, but throughout the civilized world. A depression so general as to command universal attention, and thus extort individual confession, certainly cannot be without a cognizable cause and a judicious recognition of that cause, may help at least, to indicate a remedy. We shall confine our remarks to this country—to these United States. Interrogate any wholesale merchant and he tells you sales are small and collections hard to make. The retail trader makes the same complaint—the manufacturer, mechanic, professional man all answer in the same strain, demonstrating the existence of depression in the money market and dullness in trade producing dissatisfaction, strikes, &c., among dependent classes. And yet I venture the assertion, sustained as I am by official statistics; that at no time in this nation's history has her agricultural products equaled the returns of the past three years. If this is a fact, and it is: then it is a self-evident proposition, that there must somewhere be extravagance in consumption, or a waste of nature's supplies: as we cannot account for "Hard times," by assuming overproductiveness, while thousands are destitute of daily bread. In other words, we cannot assume overproductiveness of useful and necessary articles as a cause, while hundreds of thousands of our people have bare backs, unshod feet, and empty stomachs. Our climate and soil is all that man can wish, scientific discoveries and inventions fill our country with labor saving facilities, and yet thousands of our people are without work and without bread, and then swell the doleful cadence "Hard times." Ruskin says of England "Though we are deafened with the noise of the spinning wheels and the rattle of looms our people have no clothes; though they are black with digging fuel they die with cold; though our millions of acres are covered with ripe golden grain, our people die for want of bread." We have not an overpopulation, for millions of broad acres await the woodman's axe, and the farmer's plow, in fact we have underconsumption, and seek foreign markets because our own people have not wherewith to buy what they need. If our products are in the market waiting for buyers and our people are naked and hungry and do not buy; it is not because they do not need them, but because they have not the means, and they have not the means because they have "wasted their substance in riotous living." The facts are, our people squander their means for luxuries, and die for the want of necessities. If a man consumes on his lust what God intended should meet the necessary demands of himself, his wife, or child; who is to blame when the wolf of destitution stands howling at his door? Let us look at facts, during the years of 80, 81, and 82, there was drunk in these United States the following amounts of intoxicating liquors:

In 1880, \$733,816,495.
In 1881, \$800,112,580.
In 1882, \$875,665,344.
Total in three years. \$2,409,594,419.
Making an annual average of \$803,198,139.

This \$803,198,139 has been consumed annually by this nation, simply, on its lust, and is but one item. Then look at the results of this gratification. It compels us to feed clothe and provide for 50,000 Lunatics—to feed clothe and shelter 30,000 Idiots—to provide for 40,000 paupers. While as a nation we annually sacrifice 6000 human lives to sustain this dark damnation drink, and then call ourselves Christians and complain of Hard times. I belong to no Temperance society, am no temperance fanatic, but as a man, a citizen, a Christian, I am tired-sick at heart, hearing Christians complain about God, his providence &c., yet wasting his bounties for what is not bread, wallowing in the filth of tobacco, voting under the influence of Alcohol sustaining the productive cause of 82 per cent of all the crimes in the land, robbing God—soul and body to consume it on their lusts, and then cry—"Hard times."

"The ox knoweth his owner; and the ass his mas-

ter's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." "Put away evil from among you. * * * Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; he that hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn" (voted) deceitfully church and state depressed ministers—hungry souls starving for the bread of life. Educational facilities crippled, while we build high our funeral pyre and crown its darkened summit with 60,000 human victims, and drowned their wail by the cry for bread of 40,000 paupers 50,000 insane, the jabbering of 30,000 idiots, the heart rending screams of 45,000 widowed wives: and the deep convulsive groans of 120,000 crushed and bleeding parents' hearts.

"O church of God, Awake! Awake!
Thine own immortal strength put on;
With terror clothed, hell's kingdom shake,
And cast her foes with fury down."

A Consuming Fire.

I had been asked to go to a mining village in the suburbs of the city, and speak a word for Jesus. There was a hall there that others might use for that purpose, but being a woman, I could not have it. I said to my friends, "Oh, never mind! It is fine weather. Just tell the villagers I will be there, and we can meet at the Blaze Hills." When the day came, there was a text in my mind, but not the kind I wanted. I was going among rough, hard men, and I wanted to speak tenderly and graciously of my Father in heaven. I wanted to tell how God loved them, but the text that kept in my mind was, "Our God is a consuming fire." I began to ask the Lord to give me something else. I said, "I cannot go amongst them with that. They talk enough of hell to one another. Give me something else to tell them of."

The afternoon came, and I had to start, as I had some distance to go, and the last two miles I had to walk. My text was still the trouble. Those awful words were there, and it was as if my memory was gone from me on any other passage; and so I walked on, asking God to give me light. Just then I passed a brick-yard. Three kilns were there in different stages of burning. "Well," I thought, "here is burning; but there could not be bricks without it." A little way, and I passed an iron-stone pit, and beside it was a great heap of iron-stone, all laid in order and just newly kindled. I knew it would go on burning for weeks; and just behind me, in the sky, I could see the reflection of the fires from the large smelting furnaces, and I knew men used fire to serve their purposes. There was something in the clay and in the iron that nothing but fire could reach, to make them useful. Just then I began to see that God had to do the same, because there was something in men that made them useless to God, and a curse to one another. And so God sent Jesus Christ to Calvary, and there the fire of his love and holiness burned until righteousness was manifested. And now we can hide in him, and God will work in us the work of righteousness; and we need not fear trials, crosses, or disappointments, as they are only our Father saying, "I will burn up the dross, and take away the tin, until you reflect my character; and I will sit by you as a refiner of silver, until the work is done." But those who refuse to thus hide in Christ and be purified, will meet the Refiner in another form on that day that he has fixed to try men's lives, whether they be good or bad.

Such were my thoughts. But on looking around, I saw a thunder-cloud just settling over the village. My friends came to meet me, to tell me there was a very large crowd gathered, but doubted whether it were best to begin, as that cloud would be sure to come down on us in thunder and rain.

I said, when I came along, "God knows we cannot get a house, and do you think He does not want this meeting?" So we went on, I praying, "Lord, keep thy hand underneath that cloud until I tell them of thy love and power." And tell them I did, for more than half an hour, with a sense of His presence all along. I then prayed, and thought we were done; but one of my friends said he would like to say a word, I whispered to him, "Mind what you said about the cloud." He had just uttered a sentence or two, when the big drops began to fall. There was a general rush for the

cottages, and then for more than an hour we had thunder and rain; and while it rained I was praising God, because it seemed so plain to me that this work was His, and we just needed to be in His hand, with our eyes upon Himself, for the carrying forward, as well as the filling in, of all the details.

—MARY GILCHRIST.

Bringing Out The Bible.

The following item clipped from among the daily news with reference to the life and character of one whose name is on every tongue in these his funeral days, is worthy of more than casual passing notice usually accorded common news-items:

"Dr. Newman says that when he was with the Grants at Long Branch they always had family-prayers morning and evening. The morning services were for a time held after breakfast. One day some callers made the after-breakfast services impossible. The next morning General Grant brought out the Bible himself before breakfast, saying, 'we were cheated out of our services yesterday. Hereafter we will have services before breakfast.'

This is evidence that General Grant entertained sentiments of respect for the Holy Bible and the custom of family devotion which has ever entered into the family history of every true and devoted Christian. There is this general significance in the establishment of this Christian custom in his household. True, it was with the presence and aid of a Christian minister; but the presence of a gospel minister, especially under the circumstances of sea-side relaxation, was a favorable comment on Grant's respect for the Christian religion represented in the office and work of one of the Lord's chosen messengers of saving truth. As far as we can now call to mind, no president of the United States ever identified himself in such close bonds of intimate personal association and friendship with a minister of the gospel. Bringing out the Bible with his own hands, and changing the time of morning family worship to insure its uninterrupted and certain enjoyment strikes us as one of the most sublime deeds of this sublime life.—WESLEYAN METHODIST.

"Such as I Have I Give Thee."

Here is a lame Jewish beggar lying at the beautiful gate of the temple; and here is a Galilean fisherman, quite as poor as the beggar, walking into the temple court. The beggar asks alms, and the fisherman stops a moment. He cannot refuse to give; but what has he? No silver or gold, nor anything that the man was begging for. But he himself, is not, after all, so poor. He has something that the beggar knows nothing of—a divine power, but lately lodged in him by the coming down of the Holy Ghost. This divine power, and divine fullness, he may use, and now for the first time the fisherman puts forth his God-given strength—his divine fullness. He says, Look on me. The beggar looks, expecting gold. The fisherman takes him by the hand, and speaks the word—power flows out, healing flows in—the man is cured. Ah, here is the display of a wondrous possession, in comparison with which silver and gold are nothing. Here is a man with whom God has put himself in connection; here is a man who has a whole magazine of heavenly blessing at his disposal, whose resources are beyond all human measure, though wholly unlike all that man values or cares for. The man I speak of is simply a believing man; not a man of learning, or genius, or position, or culture, but simply a believing man. Such was the fisherman of Capernaum. It is the believing man that wields the sceptre, who has access to the stores of the kingdom. Not many rich, not many wise, not many noble are called.

Early Training.

As letters graven in the body of a tree, grow up with the tree, and the fruit of the tree grows up with the tree, and therefore the twigs break not with the greatness of the weight of it, because they grow up together; so plant good things in those that are young, inure them to know good things, to hate ill ways; plant in them blessed desires and inure them to holy exercises and good duties, that good exercise may grow up with them, as fruit with the tree.